

**U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
NASHVILLE DISTRICT**

DRAFT

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

**Water Supply Storage Reallocation
Center Hill Lake
DeKalb, Putnam, White and Warren Counties, Tennessee**

1. Public Law 85-500 (1958 Rivers and Harbors Act) authorized the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to include Municipal and Industrial (M&I) water storage in reservoir projects and to reallocate storage in existing reservoirs from other uses to M&I uses, provided that the project's authorized purposes are not affected. Center Hill Lake, with authorized project purposes of flood control and hydroelectric power production, has been in operation since 1949. Currently two municipality water intakes have been allowed in Center Hill Reservoir without having water supply contracts. In addition, there are two other requests for water withdrawal.
2. As a long-term means to address water supply demand, the Nashville District proposes to reallocate some reservoir storage for M&I water supply based on hydrological studies conducted for the *Reallocation Report for Water Supply Storage on Center Hill Reservoir, Tennessee (2001)*. A total of 9401.0 acre-feet of water stored in the hydropower pool would be reallocated to water supply. Under this scenario of storage reallocation, the maximum reservoir drawdown that would be experienced during extreme drought conditions would be approximately 0.5 foot.
3. Pursuant to ER 200-2-2, Policy and Procedures for Implementing NEPA, an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the proposed water supply storage reallocation alternative and the no action alternative are evaluated in the EA. Utilization of ground water sources, purchasing of water from other entities, and constructing another dam and reservoir were alternative means of meeting water supply demand that were evaluated in the previously mentioned Reallocation Report. These alternatives were not found to be feasible from technical, permitting, and cost/benefit

considerations; therefore, they were eliminated from further evaluation in this EA.

4. The EA indicates that the proposed water storage reallocation is environmentally sensitive to the natural resources of the reservoir area and would allow the M&I users to meet existing and future water requirements in the most cost-effective manner. The maximum 0.5-foot reservoir drawdown that would be rarely experienced during extreme drought conditions would result in minor, short-term impacts on other uses or environmental resources. The no action alternative, in order to comply with Public Law 78-534, would cause M&I users to discontinue withdrawals and find other sources of water. Meeting requested water demands of the area could be restricted if alternative sources of water are significantly more costly.

5. The proposed water supply storage reallocation was coordinated with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA), under the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (FWCA) (48 Stat. 401, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 661 et seq.). During project scoping, the USFWS stated that impacts to fish and wildlife resources and the public use thereof would be negligible.

6. The proposal is in compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). The Tennessee Historical Commission concurred by letter during the scoping process that the project would have no effect upon National Register of Historic Places listed or eligible properties.

7. A Scoping/Public Notice describing the project alternatives was issued on January 7, 2000 with an amendment issued January 24, 2000. The notice was sent to local, state, and federal governmental agencies with responsibilities for activities within the study area and those that have an interest in the project. Other than those previously mentioned, written responses received include the following:

The Southeastern Power Administration addressed two issues of concern: the proposed amount of water supply storage reallocation being within the Nashville District Engineer's discretionary reallocation authority and review of methodology used in determining revenue collected and applied to Power debt repayment to offset impacts of

reallocation. These issues are addressed in the full Water Supply Storage Reallocation Report.

Copies of the draft EA or a Notice of Availability are being distributed to the government agencies as listed above and any others with special interest or have requested a mailing. All comments received will be considered in finalizing the EA.

8. Floodplain and Hazardous, Toxic or Radiological Waste concerns are not applicable to the proposed water storage reallocation. Additionally, the proposed project is located in an attainment zone for purposes of the Clean Air Act Conformity Rule. Finally, the proposal would not disproportionately impact minority or low income populations, and is in compliance with Executive Order 12898 on Environmental Justice.

9. I have reviewed the proposed reallocation of water storage in Center Hill Reservoir and the Environmental Assessment in light of the general public interest, and have determined that the proposed reallocation to M&I water supply does not constitute a major Federal action significantly affecting the human environment within the meaning of the National Environmental Policy Act, as amended. Accordingly, I have concluded that preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. Finally, having weighed the potential benefits that may be accrued as a result of the proposal against the reasonably foreseeable detrimental effects, I conclude that the proposed water reallocation is in the public interest.

Date

Steven W. Gay
Lieutenant Colonel
Corps of Engineers
District Engineer